



16711

12 November 1996

From: Commander, Eighth Coast Guard District
To: Distribution

Subj: APPLICABILITY OF TONNAGE MEASUREMENT SYSTEMS TO U.S. FLAG
VESSELS

Ref: (a) Navigation and Vessel Inspection Circular No. 11-93

1. Some companies have experienced difficulties in foreign ports when the U.S. tonnage for their vessels is not recognized by the government's maritime officials. In an attempt to help these companies, some OCMI's have written letters explaining that the United States has determined that these vessels qualify to retain their national tonnage for certain international conventions. Enclosure (1) is provided as a standard format for OCMI's who choose to issue such letter.

2. Reference (a) provides guidance regarding the use of national tonnage on certain vessels making international voyages. It grants to the American Bureau of Shipping (ABS) and Det Norske Veritas (DNV) the responsibility of issuing U.S. Tonnage Certificate to U.S. vessels. Enclosure (1) to reference (a) discusses issuance of a U.S. Tonnage Certificate by either ABS or DNV.

3. Some U.S. companies have encountered expensive delays when foreign authorities fail to recognize these classification society issued tonnage certificates. The confusion by foreign governments often has to do with their questioning the applicability of national tonnage conventions for international treaties such as SOLAS, STCW and MARPOL.

4. In several cases OCMI letters have been accepted in the foreign ports and have proven very beneficial to vessel owners. Although there is no requirement for OCMI's to issue letters of this type, enclosure (1) should be used as the format for any future letters that they decide to issue.

5. Comments or requests for additional information may be addressed to LT Keith Fordham at (504) 589-6743.

Wayne J. Guzman (for)
J. W. CALHOUN
By direction

Encl: (1) Sample Format Letter

Dist: All Eighth District Coastal MSOs and MSU



Serial
Date

Vessel Owner
Attn:
Vessel Owner Street
City, State Zip

Re: VESSEL NAME,
O.N. 0000000

Dear Vessel Owner:

This is in response to your fax of XXXXXXXX, requesting that the U.S. Coast Guard provide a statement concerning tonnage measurement system applicability for the referenced vessel.

The International Convention on Tonnage Measurement of Ships, 1969, came fully into force on July 18, 1994. Under the provisions of this convention, as supplemented by International Maritime Organization (IMO) Resolutions A.494(XII), A.540(13) and A.541(13), a vessel meeting certain criteria may retain the gross tonnage assigned under the preexisting national tonnage measurement system for the purpose of applying requirements of specific international conventions. In this case, the gross tonnage as appears on the International Tonnage Certificate (1969) is not applicable.

----- DECLARATION -----

The U.S. Coast Guard acknowledges that the referenced vessel is currently of United States registry and qualifies for retaining the preexisting national gross tonnage under the provisions of the International Convention on Tonnage Measurement of Ships, 1969, and related IMO resolutions. The preexisting national gross tonnage assigned to this vessel under the United States Regulatory Tonnage Measurement System is:

GROSS TONNAGE = XXXXXX

This tonnage shall be used for the purpose of determining applicability of requirements under the following international conventions: 1) Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS); 2) Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW); and 3) Prevention of Pollution From Ships (MARPOL).

Sincerely,

J. C. DOE
Captain, U.S. Coast Guard
Officer in Charge
Marine Inspection

SAMPLE